United Nations A/60/82

General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 June 2005

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Item 54 (f) of the preliminary list*
Sustainable development: promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 1996-2005

Letter dated 31 May 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of Germany — as announced by Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg — hosted the International Conference for Renewable Energies referred to as Renewables 2004 in Bonn, Germany, from 1 to 4 June 2004. This intergovernmental conference was attended by delegations from 154 countries, including 121 Ministers responsible for energy, the environment and development, alongside many representatives from the United Nations and other international organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholder groups.

The key outcomes of the International Conference were as follows:

(a) The Political Declaration contains, inter alia, the shared vision "that renewable energies, combined with energy efficiency, will become a most important and widely available source of energy and will offer new opportunities for cooperation among all countries" and reaffirms the commitment "to substantially increase with a sense of urgency the global share of renewable energies in the total energy supply". It also contains provisions for a follow-up of the Conference.

(b) The International Action Programme consists of almost 200 voluntary commitments and actions which reflect new and unprecedented evidence of the international community's dedication to renewable energies. As one of the German contributions to this programme, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder committed additional assistance funds which will lead to investment in renewable energies and energy efficiency of 500 million euros over the next five years.

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

05-37267 (E) 080605

(c) The Policy Recommendations for Renewable Energies offer an exemplary menu of strategies for decision makers in public and private institutions.

I should be grateful if the present letter and the annexed Political Declaration of the International Conference for Renewable Energies could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session under item 54 (f) of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Gunter **Pleuger**

Annex to the letter dated 31 May 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Political Declaration of the International Conference for Renewable Energies

1. Ministers and Government Representatives from 154 countries, gathered in Bonn, Germany, from 1 to 4 June 2004, for the International Conference for Renewable Energies,[a] acknowledge that renewable energies combined with enhanced energy efficiency can significantly contribute to sustainable development, to providing access to energy, especially for the poor, to mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, reducing harmful air pollutants, thereby creating new economic opportunities and enhancing energy security through cooperation and collaboration.

2. Ministers and Government Representatives *agree* to build upon the results and agreements reached at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (1992), the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (2000), and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002). They *reaffirm* their commitment to substantially increase with a sense of urgency the global share of renewable energy in the total energy supply. They share the vision that renewable energies, combined with increased energy efficiency, will become a most important and widely available source of energy and will offer new opportunities for cooperation among all countries.

3. Ministers and Government Representatives also *reaffirm* their commitment to achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goals to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and to achieve environmental sustainability by 2015. Reaching these goals will require significantly expanded access to energy in developing countries. It is estimated that up to 1 billion people can be given access to energy services from renewable sources, provided that market development and financing arrangements can be enhanced as intended through the Conference's International Action Programme.

4. Recognizing the diversity of circumstances among regions and countries as well as their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, Ministers and Government Representatives *underline* the need for coherent regulatory and policy frameworks that support the development of thriving markets for renewable energy technologies and recognize the important role of the private sector. This includes removing barriers and allowing for fair competition in energy markets and taking into account the concept of internalizing external costs for all energy sources. Such frameworks are essential to realizing the potentials for renewable energy technologies in an effective and efficient manner, to creating favourable conditions for public and private investments in renewable energies, and to extending modern energy services to populations currently without access. Ministers and Government Representatives *take note* of countries that have adopted, and others that will adopt, targets for enhancing the share of renewables in their

[a] In the context of Renewables 2004, renewable energy sources and technologies include solar energy, wind energy, hydropower, biomass energy including biofuels, and geothermal energy.

national energy mix, and also takes note with appreciation of the Policy Recommendations for Renewable Energies, which provide a menu of options to decision makers.

5. Ministers and Government Representatives *view* enhanced international cooperation for capacity-building and technology transfer, effective institutional arrangements at all levels, corporate responsibility, microfinance, public-private partnerships, and advanced policies by export credit agencies as crucial to expanding finance for renewable energies. Financial incentives and higher shares of official development assistance as catalytic funding should also be considered. International financial institutions, including the World Bank and the regional development banks, should significantly expand their investments in renewables and energy efficiency and should establish clear objectives for renewable energies in their portfolios.

6. Ministers and Government Representatives *support* the strengthening of human and institutional capacities for renewable energies. This includes: (a) building capacity for policy analysis and technology assessment and strengthening educational efforts, gender mainstreaming and the role of women; (b) raising awareness of Government decision makers and financiers of the benefits of renewable energies; (c) promoting consumer demand for renewable energy technologies; (d) supporting development of marketing, maintenance and other service capacities; and (e) strengthening regional and international collaboration and stakeholder participation, including women's groups, to facilitate access to, and sharing of, relevant information and good practice.

7. Ministers and Government Representatives *emphasize* the need for additional targeted research and development, especially by developed countries, including indigenous research and technology development in developing countries and economies in transition. Emphasis should be on affordability and cost reduction, on innovative business and financing models and on cost-effective, consumer-friendly, cost-recovery models, recognizing that different renewable technologies offer different opportunities and face different constrains.

8. Ministers and Government Representatives *commit* to work towards these objectives, individually and jointly, by undertaking the actions they have submitted for inclusion in the International Action Programme and through other voluntary measures. They *agree* that these measurable steps should be reported to the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development and that progress should be reviewed as foreseen in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. An appropriate arrangement for follow-up should be identified in a future meeting in preparation for the fourteenth and fifteenth sessions of the Commission.

9. Ministers and Government Representatives *agree* to work within a "global policy network" together with representatives from parliaments, local and regional authorities, academia, the private sector, international institutions, international industry associations, consumers, civil society, women's groups, and relevant partnerships worldwide. This informal network should take into account the work already being undertaken by existing partnerships and should promote a comprehensive and open exchange of diverse perspectives, lessons and experiences in the development and application of renewable energies.

10. Finally, Ministers and Government Representatives are *committed* to achieving tangible progress, as well as substantive follow-up, at the fourteenth and fifteenth sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development and therefore *resolve* to continue the high-level political dialogue begun in Bonn.

11. The Ministers expressed their compliments to the Government of Germany and the German people for organizing the International Conference and for the opportunity it represented to stress the importance for advancing in the implementation of the commitments of Johannesburg on renewable energies to reach sustainable development worldwide.